



City of Seattle

Department of Planning and Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Application Number: 3012676
Applicant Name: Seattle Department of Finance and Administrative Services
Address of Proposal: 633 32nd Ave. East (Fire Station 34)
CF# 311875

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Council Land Use Action to allow a two-story, 1,130 sq. ft. addition to expand an existing public facility (Fire Station #34). No change in parking.

The following approvals are required:

Council Land Use Action to allow expansion of a city facility not meeting development standards in an LR-2 zone. (SMC Chapter 23.76.064)

SEPA DETERMINATION: ☒ Exempt ☐ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS

☐ DNS with conditions

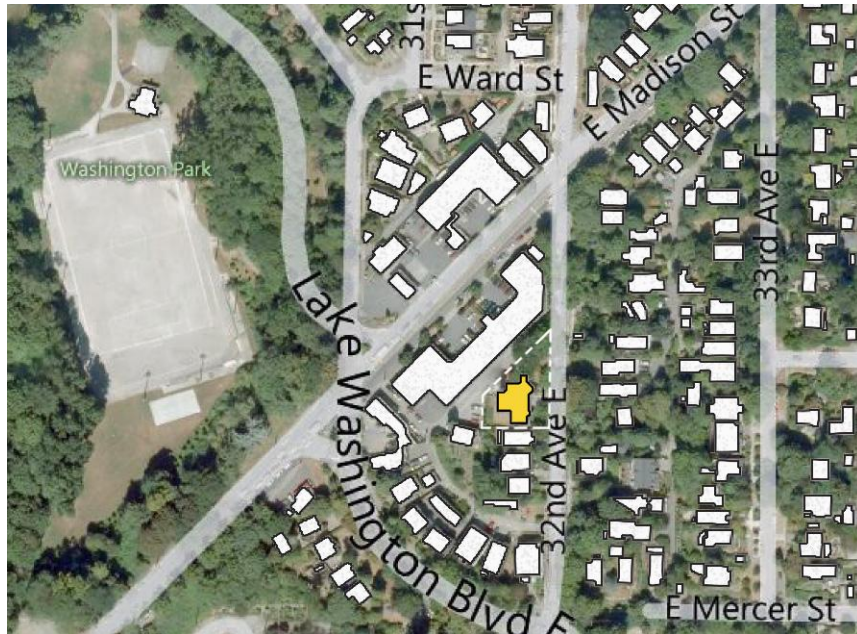
☐ DNS involving non exempt grading or demolition
or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Vicinity Description

The subject site is the current location of Seattle Fire Station No.34 in the Madison Park area addressed at 633 32nd Ave East. The site, zoned LR-2 (Lowrise Two), is bounded directly on the north and west by neighborhood commercial structures and to the east and south by single family dwellings. There is an alley behind the site that is platted at 16 feet wide and paved to its full width behind the existing Station No. 34. Currently, there are five existing parking stalls accessed via the alley that service the Station. Station 34 is a back-in station with apparatus bay doors and apron opening onto 32nd Avenue East.

Fire Station No. 34 is on a moderately sized parcel of land (12,348 sq. ft.) for such a facility. The site was originally developed with a smaller fire station in 1917. In 1970, the station was redeveloped with the existing structure. Fire Station No. 34 occupies a strategic location within Madison Park to maintain minimal response times to the surrounding neighborhoods.



Proposal Description

The proposed project is a renovation and small building addition, internal modifications, and seismic upgrades to the existing 3,657 sq. ft. building. The building addition includes an approximate 900 sq. ft. addition off the southwest corner (rear) of the building, and a 200 sq. ft. dayroom addition on the north side of the station. The 900 sq. ft. addition would contain key apparatus bay support functions clustered around the southwest exterior wall of the apparatus bay, of which 225 sq. ft. would be located on a second story to minimize the footprint of the addition. The existing basement and some underutilized spaces on the ground floor would be remodeled and utilized to the maximum extent possible to house programmatic elements that do not require adjacency to the apparatus bay. The 900 sq. ft. rear addition would overlook the service alley to the west of the site and face the back of the commercial building across the alley and a single family home to the southwest. This adjacent house is currently screened by two-story vegetation on its site.

Site improvements (in addition to the building addition) would include a 30-inch high site wall, concrete stair and porous concrete landing to allow access to the area around the proposed addition, and an underground 600 gallon fuel tank to serve an emergency generator to be located on the roof of the building. The generator will be located as far north on the new addition as possible, away from the single family home just south of the site, and will be screened visually and acoustically with an architectural enclosure. The enclosure is expected to reduce sound levels from its operation to 68dBA at a distance of 23 feet away during its monthly test runs and when used during a power failure condition. A screened fence enclosure for trash and recycle bins is also proposed for the site, which is located directly off the alley. The existing five staff parking spaces also located and accessed from the alley, will remain with no modifications.

Requested Development Standard Departure

As proposed, the new addition to the existing station No. 34 requires City Council approval of the following departure from the Seattle Land Use Code:

Structure Depth. To allow the proposed structure to exceed the maximum allowed depth (SMC 45.570.E). Proposed is a structure depth of 84 feet 4 inches (72.8 feet allowed).

Landmarks Preservation

The existing building is not a Designated City Historic Landmark nor is the site adjacent to one.

Design Commission Review

This seismic upgrade and minor addition was not reviewed by the Seattle Design Commission.

Public Comments

An open house was held on November 19th, 2011 at the Station from 1:00pm to 3:00pm with the intent to inform the community of the upcoming project. There were over 200 people in attendance. The project was well received by the community with many expressing support for their neighborhood fire fighters.

Public notice of application at DPD was made and a comment period ran from November 10, 2011 to November 23, 2011. No public comments were received by DPD.

ANALYSIS — COUNCIL LAND USE ACTION

Fire stations in lowrise multifamily zones may be permitted outright when they meet the development standards for institutions. Fire stations that do not meet development standards may be permitted by City Council as a Type V land use decision. In this case, the proposed addition to the station does not meet one of the development standards of the LR-2 zone. This standard and the amount of departure are listed in the Requested Development Standard Departure section above.

SMC 23.76.064 includes provisions for the City Council to grant concept approval and to waive or modify applicable development standards, accessory use requirements, special use requirements or conditional use criteria for City Facilities. SMC 23.76.064 classifies this decision as a legislative action (Type V MUP).

Section 23.51A.004 includes criteria that must be satisfied to permit a public facility that does not meet development standards of the applicable zone. Code proscribed criteria are shown in italics below, each followed by DPD analysis.

The location of the public facility addresses public service needs; and

The current fire station has been operational since it was built originally in 1917, and rebuilt in 1970. It is strategically located to minimize response times with access to East Madison St, a major NE/SW thoroughfare.

any waiver or departure from development standards or administrative conditional use criteria is necessitated by those public service delivery needs; and

The Station 34 site, while in an excellent location to provide emergency service, is considered to have limited developable area in relation to the preferred size for modern, two bay stations. It is not economically and operationally sound to relocate this station, nor condemn additional residential property adjacent to the site in order to more closely meet development standards for an institution in a lowrise zone.

The requested development standard departure is required to permit an addition with a minimal building foot print while enhancing operational efficiencies by providing necessary equipment areas adjacent to the vehicle equipment. The new program elements have been located in the most operationally functional area of the apparatus bay within the confines of the unique site. The proposed SW addition, necessitating the requested departure, is proposed in the area with the low amount of impact to the surrounding neighborhood, facing the public alley. The single development standard departure is necessary to allow this design for a fire station to be put on this site with the existing LR-2 zoning.

The impact of the public facility on surrounding properties has been addressed in the design, siting, landscaping and screening of the facility.

Site context has been an important element of the architectural design of the proposed addition for Fire Station Number 34. The addition is confined to the rear and sides of the existing station as a way to preserve the main street facing facade of the station. The new addition will utilize similar materials to those in the existing station, which is predominantly brick. Large window openings provide scale and visual interest. A vertical green screen with vegetation is integrated along the façade facing the adjacent property owner. The drawing below provides a graphic representation of this relationship.



VIEW FROM SW CORNER

arc
ARCHITECTS

RECOMMENDATION – COUNCIL APPROVALS

DPD **recommends approval** of the proposed fire station use in the LR-2 zone with the requested modification to the development standard as described in Project Description section above.

Signature: (signature on file)
Scott Kemp, Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

Date: April 5, 2012